

do so. We kind of like it that most New Yorkers when moving to another area do not set up another group if one already exists just to be different. We are a little distressed by westerners coming east and setting up what they call 'advanced California dance groups' thus creating a split in a community about dances. Folk dancing should be a medium through which peoples are brought together not split up..... so we hope our dancers at least will not be guilty of such shenanigans. Out in Long Island several folk dance teachers have developed a nice nucleus of folk dancers in the past ten years. It certainly is distressing to hear that one Californian can cause confusion by starting a group in different versions of dances done traditionally there for ten years. It would have been much better for the movement as a whole if such split did not occur."

Though the following is not related to the preceding, I think it is a "cute" incident portraying a type of "character" leaders often have to put up with.

My friend Frank Giori, from Buffalo, was visiting Chicago, and I took him down to one of the local folk dance places. At that place was present a character who frequents one of my classes. This person, even if he should be dancing for the next 350 years will know no more than he knows now, which, incidentally, is nothing. He has absolutely no idea of tempo, nor can he distinguish between waltz, polka, schottische, or even a simple skip step. He is no young chick and must be well over 50, but he has an eye for youth and beauty and will always pick on the prettiest and most youthful dancer present. Seeing me at the dance, he displayed great delight, grabbed a poor, innocent bystander (he is never courteous) and dragged her over to me and shouted: "You see this man! This is Mr. Beliajus. He teaches at the University and he taught me everything I know." He then takes her to the center of the floor, steps all over her feet, kicks her shins, and the poor girl finally runs away from him ere even a part of the dance was performed. At first I was amused. He, though left on the middle of the floor, was in no way daunted; on he ran to the side lines and found himself another pretty lass and again the same procedure. I was beginning to feel most uncomfortable, sweating under my collar and exclaiming "Jesus-Maria" under my breath. Meanwhile, Frank Giori asked one of his victims for a dance, and she remembered seeing him sit near me and stated: "If that guy (meaning me) taught you everything you know, thank you, I don't want to dance with you." Needless to say, this became much too ridiculous and there was nothing I could do unless I wanted to raise a fuss; so we decided the best would be to leave the place altogether. There is nothing one could do with a damaging character like that, who, plainly, is a "case." These are bad enough, therefore, let us try to impress upon the others who are not extremes that their behavior is the "weather vane" either toward good or ill will, and it is good will that we are all striving for.

#### THE MOST RIDICULOUS AUDACITY OF THE CENTURY

One folk dance teacher who claims a record of teaching folk dancing for the past 16 years, made the following statement in a publication: "Since the same dance serves for many European cultures, each group tutored by ..... learns the same routine but adopts the costume of its own national origin."

## A REPORT FROM SEATTLE, WASH.

by June Loesch

In February the Order of Vasa sponsored the 26th Annual Swedish Midwinter Festival. Entertainers included the "Valley Rhythmeers" a boys and girls orchestra, the University of Washington Scandia Folk Dancers, the Alpenroesli Double Quartet composed of eight Swiss yodelers in native costume directed by Gottlibb Ryberry, the Swedish accordionist Eric B. Lennquist, and a violin soloist, EEmma Nelson. The Scandia dancers performed Polka Potpourri, Swedish Family Waltz, Gamal Reinlandar, Norwegian Mazurka, Oxdansen, Hambo and Schottische Medtur. Afterwards the audience participated in an evening of dancing polkas, schottisches, hambos, Varsouviene, etc.

At a recent monthly meeting of the Washington State Folk Dance Federation in Kirkland, some of the members of the University Scandia Club group which toured Sweden last summer made their first appearance before an audience dancing a Schottische in Figures, Oxdansen and Fryamennadans. Bill Holm, who also accompanied the Scandia Club group to Sweden, exhibited some of his American Indian dances.

Every Saturday morning the Seattle Art Museum sponsors a children's story hour which is occasionally varied with a movie or some special feature. Recently the Seattle Chapter of Hadassah presented some folk dances by Israeli students and a special exhibit of art and models of cities by the children of present-day Israel. "Tomorrow is a Wonderful Day", an excellent film about the life of children in the new nation, was also shown. The dance group directed by Ruth Korman presented Circle from Sarid, Tscherkessia, and a Hora.

The East and West Association presented Jean Destine and Jeanne Ramon and noted Haitian drummer Alphonse Cimber at the University of Washington on March 19th in dances of Haiti. Jean Destine first learned these dance rituals as a boy under the watchful eye of a Haitian priest. He has performed in Carnegie Hall, Times Hall and throughout the land with Katherine Dunham's "Bal Negre." This is their first season on tour as a team. Jean Destine will teach at Jacob's Pillow, Mass. this summer. Their program included: Fantaisie D'Amour, Afro-Haitian Dance, Slave Dance, Martinique, Choucounne, Market Dance, Spider Dance, Carnival themes, and Witch Doctor Dance plus drum solos by Cimber.

The International Folk Arts, directed by Chet and Dorothy Little, hosted the third in a series of international dances for the folk dance clubs in Seattle. This one was held at Loyal Heights Fieldhouse on March 9th with an evening filled with dancing.

Pupils of Seattle's Catholic High Schools presented a St. Patrick's Day program at the Metropolitan Theatre on March 18th. Don McDermott, Seattle tenor, sang as well as a 170-voice all girl's Rosarian Choir. "Breath of Old Erin" dances were performed by Susan Greif, Patricia Dennehy and Judith Topel.

The 130th Anniversary of Greek Independence Day was celebrated Sunday, March 25th, by Seattle's Greek Community. A banquet was held with Greek songs, poems and music entertainment. This was followed by a dance with exhibitions of Greek folk and classical dancing by the young people in native costumes.

The recently formed Central Puget Sound Council of the Washington Folk Dance Federation held their Spring Festival at the Trianon Ballroom in Seattle on March 29, with a capacity crowd. Exhibitions included a

Medley of Contra Dances by Seattle Forty-Niners, The Highland Fling and Sword Dance by the Highland Dancing Association, Indian Hoop Dance by Bill Holm, and Medley of Mexican Dances by the Welkin Ringers. The Olympia, Washington Community Center held their Spring Square Dance Festival on March 31. The High-line Hoedowners of Seattle exhibited international dances during intermission.

A group of 30 Austrian students presented a delightful evening of singing, yodeling and dancing at St. Martin's College near Olympia, Washington on April 4. This is a similar group which toured the United States last year appearing at the St. Louis National Folk Festival and in many other cities through the country.

The Silver Spurs, a top Washington dance exhibition group, made its first Seattle appearance at the University of Washington on April 6th. They presented a two-hour program packed with square and round dances of English, Amer., and Mexican origin. The Silver Spurs is a troupe composed of 30 teen-age boys and girls from Spokane, Washington which developed from a Western dance program begun in the Spokane public schools in 1947. They are under the direction of Edwin S. "Red" Henderson, physical education consultant for the Spokane public schools. After the exhibition program, the public participated in a square dance mixer with members of the group.

70 University of Washington foreign students toured the state during Easter vacation week presenting dances, skits, songs and talks. One group of 40 visited Ellensburg, Yakima, Grand Coulee and Ephrata. The rest visited Centralia, Longview, Aberdeen, Forks and Port Angeles. Their show, "It's A Small World" representing 13 countries was held April 21 in Tacoma and May 5 in Seattle. Profits of the show go to the International Student's Scholarship Fund.

The final program of the University of Washington's modern dance series presented Merce Cunningham and John Cage both of whom are former students of Seattle's Cornish School. Both have achieved great success on Broadway. Cage is the inventor of "prepared piano" which employs for its unusual percussion effects, everything from oscillators to donkey's jaw bones. Cunningham, who first sprang into national prominence when he was star soloist with Martha Graham, is noted for a new dance form that is characterized by breathtaking leaps and eloquent movement.

The Sofia Girls, a famous team of gymnasts from Stockholm, Sweden appeared April 14th at the University of Washington. Fifteen minutes of their program was devoted to presenting folk dances in authentic costumes loaned by a museum in Sweden.

The Washington Folk Dance Federation's Annual Festival will be held in Wenatchee on May 18 and 19. On Friday evening the Bolero's of Wenatchee will be the host for an international folk dance, Saturday morning will be devoted to an international workshop and business meetings, the American square and round dance workshop will be held in the afternoon, with the BIG dance and exhibitions held in the Wenatchee Apple on Saturday evening.

On April 13th, an International Folk Festival was held in Bellingham, Washington in connection with the Northwest District of Health, Physical Education and Recreation Convention. Groups appearing on the program were: The May Isdale Dancers of Vancouver, B.

C. in Scottish and Irish dances; The Silver Spurs of Spokane in English, American and Mexican dances; The Scandia Club; Israeli Dance Group; and Philippine Dancers all of Seattle doing dances of their native lands. Following the exhibitions, the audience participated in a class session where the leaders of the groups taught various dances. Co-chairmen of the Festival were Miss Kathro Kidwell and Mrs. Marlys Swenson Waller of the University of Washington.

#### THEY DANCE IN ALASKA TOO

The Artic Circle Folk Dance Club was organized in June, 1950 with Beatrice Culver, who used to dance with Madelynnne Greene's Festival Workshop Group as instructor and mainspring. It was the first Dance Club in this area and at present is the largest, but eight others have been started as a result.

The Folk Dance movement here is somewhat handicapped by the fact that so far we have only been able to find half a dozen people with any folk dance background but these people are so generous with their time and knowledge that we have progressed steadily.

In September our club decided to publish a monthly bulletin in an effort to help keep the activities of the groups in touch with each other and while it is still in the "army surplus typewriter, broken down mimeograph" stage we hope that time will bring an Alaskan Federation and then our paper will outgrow our club to become the Federation's official organ. Our Club is now a member of the California Folk Dance Federation, northern section.

During the Anchorage Fur Rendezvous the Alaskan Folk Dance Clubs held their first festival, which drew capacity crowds every day and was a complete success. It will be an annual affair now.

Any of your readers who come to Anchorage, either as visitors or residents, will find a warm welcome waiting for them at the Arctic Circle Folk Dance Club every Thursday night.

Jean Nelson

#### LET US TAKE A CAREFUL LOOK AT THE "NEW-CALLER"

Many remarks, often uncomplimentary, have been made about the contemporary caller-instructor who has appeared "overnight and after only one series of instructions" in a school staffed with persons of questionable qualifying experience themselves, etc., etc. Is there not another side to the story? It seems to me quite undesirable to place all new callers in the same category. What are the circumstances surrounding their introduction to square dancing and their pursuit of it since that time? In Idaho when this latest revival took place, people by the hundreds wanted to dance. There were two callers in the area capable of teaching the dancers and callers. Unfortunately great distances did not permit importing other recognized leaders to do the job. It had to be done "on the ground." The many fine callers who have emerged from this unusual experience and are pursuing their work with proper study and application of recognized techniques and with a sincerity of purpose are to be commended and encouraged. Those who are not sincere, the dancers will reject. Gus Empie